



GLANCING BACK

10 YEARS AGO IN

facts, figures and

bright ideas



Realizing the Dream with Rehab

BY CHARLOTTE UNDERWOOD

Have you ever wished you could purchase a house outright? Well, that's exactly what a New Orleans' couple, Joseph and Betty Eby, did 10 years ago. Of course, there was a catch. Their house needed major rehab work before it could be called their "dream home."

Although Betty Eby remembers it as an abandoned "crack house," her home was one of many "shotgun" houses that needed rehab during this time. The term "shotgun" evolved because it was said that a shot fired through the front door could pass unobstructed through all the rooms and out the back.

NHS of New Orleans' Construction Specialist Frank Aseron and Construction Manager Randy Michaelson wrote about their experience in assisting homeowners with their rehab challenges (*facts, figures, bright ideas*, Vol. 14, No. 2, March/April 1995).

They explained that "these houses are often inexpensive to buy but expensive to rehab, and it is NHS's challenge is to do quality rehab and keep the houses affordable."

"Finding financing was difficult," said Betty Eby as she thought back on her experience. "The NHS was the only organization that would help me."

When asked why the NHS could help the Ebys when no other lender would, Executive Director Lauren Anderson explained, "... lenders did not have a lot of confidence or product when it came to rehab. However, the NHS had a good relationship with lenders. They had confidence in our construction management system and were willing to make one loan for acquisition and renovation when they knew that NHS would oversee the job."

Still a construction manager with the NHS, Randy Michaelson serves as the homeowner's "technical advisor."

"We provide the rehab feasibility study, scope of work, the bid package to contractors, as well as oversee the contractors' work, ..." explained Michaelson. "What makes us different from the banks is that they only send inspectors out to approve progress payments, but the NHS spends time onsite during the process to make sure things are done right."

"I did have some reservations going forward with the rehab because of the condition of the house," admitted Betty Eby, "no doors, and the roof was caving in. But I, with the help of the NHS construction manager, monitored the contractor's work."

Well, 10 years later the Ebys are still in their original home.

"I love my home," said Betty Eby, "and my husband keeps up with minor maintenance. We could not have done it without the NHS!" ■

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